United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement last night, condemns Haitian military for failing to comply with Governors Island Agreement; says it is determined to enforce sanctions against Haiti and to consider stronger measures to bring about compliance with Agreement.

+ UNTAC military contingents complete withdrawal from Cambodia on schedule; military police, mine clearance and medical units to remain in country for limited period.

+ Special Representative Stoltenberg discusses United Nations operations in former Yugoslavia with Secretary-General and senior officials at Headquarters; UNHCR to discuss provision of humanitarian aid with three Bosnian parties in Geneva on Thursday.

+ United States proposes to Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) that office of Inspector General should be established to examine United Nations programmes and finances.

+ WFP launches major regional emergency relief operation for more than 800,000 Burundese refugees displaced by ethnic fighting following recent military coup in Burundi.

+ United Nations University to host two-day Japan/ASEAN Forum on "Technology Transfer and Development" beginning tomorrow in Tokyo.

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The Security Council last night condemned the military authorities in Haiti for failing to comply with the Governors Island Agreement, particularly those provisions calling for the establishment of a new police force, the departure of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In a statement read out by its President, José Luis Jesus (Cape Verde), the Council said the Agreement was the only valid framework for resolving the Haitian crisis, which continued to threaten peace and security in the region.

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The Council encouraged the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS), to work for an early return of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH). It asked him to continue planning for additional measures, including the deployment, as conditions permitted, of an appropriate United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). Stating that it was prepared to consider extra mechanisms to help verify compliance with its decisions, the Council reaffirmed its determination to ensure full enforcement of current sanctions against Haiti and welcomed measures taken by States to that effect. It also reaffirmed its determination to consider strengthening measures regarding Haiti if the military continued to obstruct compliance with the Governors Island Agreement.

The Council expressed concern for the plight of the Haitian people, for which the military authorities were responsible. It said it was determined to alleviate the situation of the most vulnerable groups and called on Member States to intensify their humanitarian assistance to the people of Haiti. the Council commended the efforts of Dante Caputo, the Special Envoy of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the OAS, and reaffirmed support for the democratically elected President and the legitimate Government of Robert Malval. It held the military authorities responsible for the security of government members and United Nations and OAS personnel in Haiti.

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Military contingents of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) yesterday completed their withdrawal from the country on schedule, leaving behind 71 military police, 15 mine clearance personnel and eight military medical personnel, according to a United Nations spokesman. At its peak, UNTAC's military presence had reached 16,000 troops.

Earlier this month, the Security Council, in resolution 879 (1993), extended the deployment of the military police and medical personnel until 31 December in order to ensure the safety of UNTAC personnel and equipment being withdrawn from Cambodia amid deteriorating security conditions. The Council also extended the deployment of the mine clearance unit until 30 November, noting the need for continuity in the work of the Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC).

Meanwhile, the military liaison team established by resolution 879 (1993) became operational yesterday. The team, consisting of 20 military officers and 15 support staff, will report to the Secretary-General on matters affecting security in Cambodia, liaise with the Government, and assist it in dealing with residual military matters relating to the Paris Agreements.

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Special Representative Thorvald Stoltenberg was in New York today for discussions with Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and senior United Nations officials on operations in the former Yugoslavia, according to a

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United Nations spokesman. Among the topics to be discussed was that of securing access into central Bosnia and Herzegovina for humanitarian convoys, which remained suspended.

Meanwhile, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata has invited the three parties to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina to a meeting in Geneva on Thursday to discuss the provision of humanitarian aid over the winter. Each of the parties has accepted the invitation, and it will be the first time since 20 September that they have met together. The human situation has been deteriorating throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and UNHCR warehouses there are now either empty or almost empty, the spokesman said.

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The United States today proposed to the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) that a high-level office of Inspector General should be established to examine United Nations programmes and finances. The Inspector General should examine and report on all regular budget, peace-keeping and extrabudgetary programmes, the Committee heard, as it continued discussing the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization. The authority of the office should eventually extend to include all agencies and programmes of the United Nations system.

The United States representative said her Government recognized that its failure to pay its assessed contributions had been damaging to the Organization. She said that the Clinton Administration was committed to paying up its current assessments and arrears, but cautioned that continuing increases in assessed contributions and support for voluntary programmes could not be taken for granted. The United States expected to pay more than $1 billion in regular budget and peace-keeping assessments by the end of the year.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) today announced the launch of a major regional emergency relief operation for more than 800,000 refugees and internally displaced people who have sought to escape the violent ethnic conflict that erupted after the recent military coup in Burundi. There has been widespread fighting between members of the minority Tutsi and majority Hutu tribes, particularly in rural areas.

About 659,000 people so far have fled from Burundi to Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire, and a further 150,000 are displaced within the country. That amounts to almost 15 per cent of the population, the majority being of Hutu origin. About 80 per cent of them are women, children or old people.

According to WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini, the most urgent need is for cash, to fund local or regional purchases of cereals and pulses.

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The total cost of the entire regional emergency operation is estimated at $14 million, and she stressed that the urgency and scope of the crisis required immediate response from the international donor community.

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The United Nations University (UNU) is to host a Japan/Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Forum on "Technology Transfer and Development" beginning tomorrow in Tokyo. The two-day Forum is the fourth in a series that started in 1990 with the aim of building stronger relations between ASEAN countries and Japan.

About 40 scholars and experts from ASEAN members and other Asian countries are expected to attend the Forum. They will identify the factors that have made technology modification possible in the region, and will examine the conditions for successful technology transfer and modification on the basis of a comparative analysis of national experiences within the regional economic environment.

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